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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 006511

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [TH](#) [UNSC](#) [UNGA](#) [BURMA](#)

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE: BRINGING BURMA BEFORE THE UNSC - THAI
INVOKE ASEAN SOLIDARITY

REF: SECSTATE 185479

Classified By: Political Counselor Susan M. Sutton, reason 1.4 (b), (d)

1.(C) Summary: Thailand is not prepared to support the proposal to bring Burma before the UN Security Council. The Thai MFA believes that other ASEAN members also will not support the proposal, although none are willing to leap to Burma's defense with the vigor that Burma has requested. End summary.

12. (C) Polcouns met with director of the MFA East Asian Affairs Department, Damrong Kraikruan, on October 13 to deliver reftel points. Damrong said that Thailand could not support the proposal to bring Burma before the Security Council. ASEAN members were uncomfortable with the situation, but would have to support Burma's request that they oppose this proposal. Damrong said that Burma had pressed the ASEAN members to assist it in a high-level lobbying effort at the UN, including having their Permanent Representatives make presentations on Burma's behalf, and writing letters saying that the substance of the critical reports was untrue. The other ASEAN countries were not prepared to go along with this proposal. They would provide "low-key" support to Burma, however. Damrong believed that the ASEAN members would, in the end, stick together on this issue.

13. (C) Damrong said that that Burmese Deputy FM OO Kyaw Thu had just met with the Thai MFA Permsec, and the UN issue had been discussed. According to Damrong, the Burmese side said that it would succeed in blocking the UNSC proposal; it claimed it already had the support of China, Japan, Brazil and Philippines. Burma expected the US to win the support of only perhaps 7 SC members. Damrong claimed that the Thai side had urged Burma to do more to address international concerns, and warned them that "this issue will not just go away."

14. (C) Damrong recounted the familiar reasons why Thailand cannot take a more aggressive stand against Burma, repeating that Thailand had to have cooperation with Burma on border security and counternarcotics efforts. Public criticism by Thailand would lead to a vindictive Burmese response, including perhaps "incidents" at the border. Damrong pointed out that, although the Thai government did not publicly criticize Burma, it did not prevent others in Thailand from doing so. The Thai press was free to publish criticisms of its neighbor, and a number of anti-SPDC NGOs operated from Thai soil. Those who were critical of Thailand's position should bear this in mind.

15. (C) Thailand and Burma were also discussing the upcoming exchange of visits. Prime Minister Thaksin wanted to visit in January/February, and the Burmese PM would probably pay a visit in Bangkok early in the year as well. Damrong said that the Thai side was waiting to see the results of an SPDC reshuffle that they expected shortly.

6 (C) Comment: We believe that the Thai are leaning on the Burmese privately, as they tell us, since they recognize the price that ASEAN is paying on Burma's behalf. The MFA is clearly uncomfortable and tired of being seen as Burma's defender, but the RTG does not appear to be ready yet to openly disrupt ASEAN solidarity. end comment.
BOYCE